DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 176 024 CE 020 604

TITLE	Student Follow-Up and Follow-Through. Two.
INSTITUTION	"Today" Education Services, Delaware, Ohio.
PUB DATE	[76]
NOTE	13p.; For a related document see CE 020 605
AVAILABLE FROM	"Today" Education Services, 192 Somerset Rd., Delaware, Ohio 43015 ($10.00 for set of five items; $8.50 for quantity orders)
EDRS PRICE	MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	*Followup Studies; *High School Students; *Job Placement; *Program Planning; Secondary Education; *Staff Role; *Vocational Followup; Work Experience Programs

ABSTRACT

In this paper, a differentiation is made between student follow-up and student follow-through. Employer evaluation of in-school students on jobs is discussed, as well as issues concerning credits for work experience. Preceding this discussion is a list of objectives designed to guide local school officials in establishing and operating a job placement services program. Also, the purpose and function of the job placement services staff are discussed. Finally, suggested learning experiences and suggested readings are listed. (BM)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED176024

STUDENT FOLLOW-UP AND FOLLOW-THROUGH

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Raymond A. Wasil

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

CE 020 004

two

STUDENT FOLLOW UP AND FOLLOW THROUGH

In this paper, a differentiation is made between student follow-up and student follow-through. Employer evaluation on in-school students on jobs is discussed as well as issues concerning credits for work experience. A model applicable to a community college is proposed. Finally, Suggested Learning Experiences and Suggested Readings are listed.

OBJECTIVES

To enable local school officials responsible for establishing and operating a School System-Based Job Placement Services Program to:

1. cite the need for and benefits of a continuing and systematic program to obtain information concerning employment activities of youth while in school and after leaving school;

2. identify the forms, procedures, and reports used in systematic follow-up studies and follow-through activities of former students;

3. assist researchers in developing and preparing insightful and analytical follow-up studies useful to school administrators, teachers, counselors, and employers;

4. improve existing school program and document the need for new programs and services;

5. compile data relative to business/industry, hiring, training, and promotional practices.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose and function of a job placement services staff is to aid young people to either prepare for, obtain, and retain employment or continue their education or training. In some cases, it may be a combination of employment and training or education. To determine if the process is adequate, the placement staff should ascertain that the services:

1. will actually meet the career needs and desires of the students served;

2. will improve and expand cooperative working relations between the school system and employers in the community;

3. will provide the school system with current and long-range feedback useful in evaluating its program offerings, curricular content, teacher effectiveness, counseling services, and preparation of students for the world-of-work.

When program staff talk with the student-employee's supervisor, prior permission should be requested and arrangements made with the employer. The visit should also be used to discuss:

a. possibilities of placing more students with the employer, particularly if the employer is satisfied with the current student-employees;

b. full-time job placement of those student-employees who are approaching graduation or exiting school in the near future.

Interviews with employers concerning student-employees should be structured around the applicable training agreement or the latest employer's student evaluation report.

If the evaluation report is satisfactory and no problems are indicated, the form may be sent to the student's counselor for review. If problems are identified or if training agreement requirements are not met, a new cycle of activity can be initiated as described below.

The employer's evaluation report plus the on-site visitation of the placement staff, interview with the student-employee, and the information obtained in the group sessions might reveal problems leading to a confrontation between the employer and the student-employee. If possible, the student may be transferred to another job in a different unit of the employer's organization which will offer desired work experience or helped to find a job with another employer.

If the student had similar problems with another employer, remedial action may be taken by the staff working in the area of placement services. A cooperative approach is recommended utilizing those placement staff or school persons who can best address themselves to the problem. This may be an individual counselor, teacher, placement staff member, or resource person or a team of any of them.

Problems dealing with work performance, such as quality of work and ability to follow instructions, might stem from loss of interest in the job or inability to read and understand at the level required. If the latter, remedial language instruction may be prescribed by the counselor. If the former, new career choices should be explored by the counselor, the job placement coordinator, and the student.

Problems of punctuality and attendance might indicate that the student needs counseling in employability skills. They may also indicate that placement staff should not have helped the student become placed until being assured that he/she had already acquired basic employability skills. Employers are particularly aggravated when part-time student-employees indicate an apparent lack of responsibility by constantly being late or absent. A school attendance record is one report frequently requested by employers considering hiring school-age youth. If the school job placement services staff recommends a student to an employer for job placement, the employer expects that the student-employee will be punctual in coming to work.

If, despite a good school attendance record, the student is habitually late because of transportation problems, employers may blame the job placement staff for not having assured the arrangement of appropriate transportation! This a matter which cannot be taken lightly if the job placement services program is to be successful in developing cooperative working relationships with employers!

Other problems which are identified through follow up might be concerned with instructional program offerings of the school system. For example, an 11th grade student who has taken and passed Chemistry II and is placed in a chemistry laboratory is expected by the employer to have some basic knowledge and skills in chemistry. If the student-employee does not possess these skills and knowledge, either the employer is expecting too much of the chemistry instructional program, or the instructional program is not preparing the student for that aspect of chemistry. The placement services staff may arrange for the employer and the chemistry faculty to discuss this problem. Its resolution may either change the employer's conception of what can normally be taught or result in curriculum change. A number of such interviews may encourage the establishment of an industry-education advisory committee, if one does not already exist.

This discussion of possible benefits of follow up by the job placement staff points to other potential benefits for students, employers, counselors, teachers, and school administrators. For example, the industry-education council and all occupational advisory committees should be kept informed concerning the findings of the follow-up process for part-time student-employees so that the committee's advisory responsibilities to the school system can be reviewed and revised. Too often, the industry-education council and the occupational advisory committees are brought into the picture only at the beginning of a school program and when crises occur. Many crisis situations can be avoided if the placement staff meets regularly with the council and advisory committees and keeps these members informed as to current problems and progress.

2. School-Leavers in Part-Time and Full-Time Jobs - Upon leaving school for a job, either part-time or full-time, former students assume a new role and status in life--that of a young adult who is responsible for making decisions about the kind of life he/she will lead. Many of these decisions will be influenced by previous educational experiences--including work experience--while in school. It is natural, therefore, that educators would want to know how the school has helped former students in making an appropriate transition to the adult world-of-work. A well organized and structured follow-up system may provide information regarding:

   a. whether or not they are currently employed, and if unemployed, do they want assistance from the placement program in finding a job; if employed, name and address of employer, and type of job held;

   b. how many jobs they have held since leaving school, including job titles, salaries, employer names and addresses;

c. how well they are doing on the job in terms of wage or salary increases since first employed, satisfaction with the work, physical working conditions, and possible promotion opportunities;

d. how well they feel they were prepared by their school for the world-of-work in general and their current job in particular;

e. what their schooling should have included in preparing them for the world-of-work and their job;

f. whether or not they are planning to stay on their current job, move to a new job with the same employer, or will be looking elsewhere for a new job; if the last alternative is indicated, do they want assistance from the placement services staff;

g. permission to request information from former and present employers concerning the student's performance;

h. whether or not they are planning to seek further education, either on a full-time or part-time basis. If so, what program of studies at what institution will be sought and if admission assistance is to be requested from the placement services staff.

A good example of such a data collection form was designed by the Florida State Department of Education and by the State of Wisconsin. A related publication in the field has been prepared in Ohio. The Ohio follow up involves student and employer follow up by mail and personal contact and utilizes data processing and manual methods.[1]

As soon as data are received from former students, the placement services director may seek additional information from the employers, i.e., an evaluation of the employee's attitudes and work habits, with the former student's name, school and employer's name and address filled in by the job placement staff. With the inclusion of some additional questions, as in the Florida forms, the procedures discussed above could include all school-leavers.

FOLLOW THROUGH

Follow through represents the use of follow-up data for program design, redesign, or development. Use of follow-up information may vary within a district or between programs depending on the objectives established. If follow-up information is not used, it has little value. If use is made of follow-up information, then the process by which that information is used to bring about change, constitutes a follow-through process. For example, data may be generated which may bring about a need for a consumer education program or a revision of a existing vocational program. In the case of a consumer ed program, a new area of need has been identified. In the case of the vocational program, a need for modification, revision, or strengthing of a existing program has been identified. Assuming that a follow up has been conducted and that information is available, the following process may be followed to bring

---

[1] Raymond A. Wasil, Model for Implementation of Follow Up, Ohio Department of Education, 1972 (revised 1974).

about the utilization of that data. The following steps constitute a process whereby this data may be taken through a series of steps to bring about a desired result.

1. Documentation of data - compilation of this data with specific objectives.

2. Analysis of data relative to stated goals or objectives.

3. Formulation of a report with recommendations.

4. Submission of the report to superintendent, board of education, and others.

5. Adaptation or modification of reported data.

6. Appropriate program or service modification.

7. Productive revisions, changes, or program implementation.

Various inputs of follow-up information which may be used at different points in time; for example, follow-up information which indicates that former students have a need for employment or additional training may be reacted to almost immediately. Follow-up data generated relative to the need for a program change would take more time to implement. The long and short term benefits to a school system which gathers and uses this type of data become obvious in terms of public relations and in terms of accountability with former students, parents, employers, and the general public.

It should be noted that the U. S. Office of Education requires an annual report from each state which receives Federal funds for vocational education. This information should be incorporated in follow-up studies that are conducted with vocational graduates and in effect may provide a district with justification for expending funds for overall vocational follow-up studies. Listed below are seven of the areas requested by the U. S. Office of Education for vocational students:

1. in each occupational program who have completed training;

2. who left school before completion of training but with job entry skills;

3. employed full-time in occupations for which they trained or in related occupations;

4. known to be unavailable for employment;

5. continuing their education at a higher level;

6. unemployed; and

7. whose status is unknown.

The state departments of education compile these Federally required reports from information supplied by the local school systems. The local school systems, in conducting placement follow-up activities, should include in their reports the data needed by the state departments to comply with the requirements of the U. S. Office of Education.

Examples of follow-up studies that have been done in various states have provided models which may be modified for use either at the state level or at the local level.

The Sarasota County, Florida, school system recently published a detailed report on its study of vocational-technical and adult education graduates and dropouts.[1] The report contains a complete description of the methodology used, copies of the forms used, and comparative data from the state and national levels. In Ohio, the Akron-Summit County Job Placement Department developed a follow-up system which can be used at both the local level in a one-school setting or in a multi-school district. This system was used in a twenty-one school district basis with both students and with employers.[2]

In terms of the use of the findings of the survey for feedback and impact on curricula, a high percentage of the questionnaires completed by both the former students and their employers contained comments of praise, criticism and suggestions for improvement. These comments, along with tabular summaries for each course, were forwarded to program coordinators and school principals for their review and action. One recommendation of the report is that this type of study would be more useful if made <u>after</u> one year.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Considerable literature exists concerning long-range follow-up procedures for vocational program students by local and state school systems, but very little deals with students from other programs. When a school system establishes a placement service program, follow-up responsibilities for all school-leavers (dropouts and graduates) are frequently assigned to that program. If a specialized research staff is assigned to the placement program, including supportive clerical staff, computer programmers and operators, and additional operating funds to conduct follow-up studies, it might then be advisable to have the placement program accept the responsibility for conducting reliable and valid analytical studies and preparing and disseminating meaningful reports.

The director of placement services should not be chosen only on the basis of an ability to design research studies and supervise research staff. However, this does not preclude job services staff from serving as resource staff to researchers in the field of placement in order to design and pilot test, and use appropriate survey instruments to obtain necessary information for placement follow-up reports. Thus, it is reasonable that staff of the placement program be responsible for follow-through studies. In a large school system, long-range studies might be conducted by the school system research division; smaller school systems can be served by the State Department of Education, a regional office of the state department, a university, or a private research organization.

---

[1] <u>Vocational-Technical and Adult Education 1974 Follow-Up Survey</u>, (Sarasota County, Florida, March, 1975).

[2] Raymond A. Wasil, <u>Follow-Up Model for Implementation</u>, (Akron-Summit County Job Placement Department, 1972, revised 1974).

Among the benefits to be obtained by having the State Department of Education assume full responsibility for designing the research instruments is greater assurance that the questions asked of the respondents will be properly validated. Writing and testing of questions to be included in the final version of a sophisticated or state-wide survey instrument requires highly trained technicians usually available only in large organizations. The Ohio State Department of Education, Division of Guidance and Testing, has developed and pilot-tested a computerized long-range follow-up system. The system is based on a baseline, one year, three years, and five years follow-up timeline.[1]

Angelo C. Gilh, Sr., in introducing a new series of articles in the American Vocational Journal dealing with follow-up studies, makes the point that:

> Optional learning is the overriding objective of all well-conceived follow up, and is most likely to be achieved when studies are designed, conducted and interpreted by persons trained for the task. Follow-up studies that fall short of this requisite are hardly more than empty gestures.[2]

It is of interest to note the procedures and cost factors of a recent study of the status of former students in eleven high schools in Minnesota.[3] The assessment procedure was designed to include all former high school students regardless of the school program taken; i.e., vocational, general, or college preparatory. Another interesting follow-up study of junior and community college students who left school to enter the labor market is being conducted by John Heitmann, a staff member of the Pratt, Kansas, Community Junior College.[4]

CONCLUSION

We are at the point in education where we must not only account for the products of our schools, but we must develop means of compiling data which would enable us to modify curriculum so as to prepare students to function effectively and with some degree of satisfaction in life. Proper organized and structured follow-up studies can not only provide statistical data in terms of how many of our vocational students are employed, but can provide input for curriculum revision and give direction to the establishment of new programs. In the past, follow-up studies have been "open-ended" with the assumption being that anything unearthed will be of value. While there exists the danger of overstructuring follow-up studies, there is an overriding need for stated objectives and goals. Follow-up studies should, thus, be designed to provide data that can be measured against those stated objectives and goals. Follow up represents one-half of the process; however, there must be some assurance that follow-up data will have some impact and, in this respect, a follow-through process is necessary. In effect, we are saying that there is not only a need to gather data, it must have a use. There is a need to not

---

[1] Raymond A. Wasil, Director, Division of Guidance and Testing, Ohio State Department of Education, Columbus, Ohio.

[2] Angelo C. Gilh, Sr., "Follow-Up Means Feedback", American Vocational Journal, March, 1975 (Washington, D. C., American Vocational Association).

[3] Minnesota Research Coordinating Unit for Vocational Education, Status of Former High School Students: Procedure for Local Assessment, (Minneapolis, Minnesota, University of Minnesota, November, 1974).

[4] For detailed information, write to: John Heitmann, Pratt Community Junior College, Natural Science Division, Pratt, Kansas 67124.

only determine whether we are meeting stated objectives and goals but to develop a process which will enable us to bring about desirable changes. In the past, merely compiling data, no matter how relevant, has not been effective primarily because a process of follow through was never structured or implemented. Education, thus, has been rightly accused of gathering data for the sake of gathering data. A further consideration must be given in terms of the life span of data that is compiled. Some data may be relevant for a relatively short period of time while other data may have a long life span. Both are worth seeking but have value only if the data is used within its life span. For example, data relative to a job opening may be classified as having a short life span whereas data relative to a skill or a person may have a long life span. Another important consideration to keep in mind is that follow-up data may be compiled not only formally but informally as well with the formal data being generated through written forms or format and informal being provided verbally. A follow-up structure must be designed which meets the needs of a district. This structure must be one which is not only practical but educationally acceptable to a district.

SUGGESTED LEARNING EXPERIENCES

1. Discuss information in text and Suggested Readings.

2. Conduct a survey of what types of follow-up activities have taken place in the district. Once this has been done, it may be shared with the group. You may also wish to invite a university researcher or an executive from a private research organization or a representative from the State Department of Education with experience in using mail questionnaires and conducting interviews to obtain recommendations as to the advantages and disadvantages of questionnaires vs. interviews in terms of costs, usable information obtained, etc., in conducting follow-up studies of former students.

3. Participants may be organized into two workshop groups. One group may be used to prepare a paper indicating in detail the type of information which should be contained in follow-up reports. This, of course, should be based on stated goals or objectives. The second group should be provided with basic follow-up data and reports which they can use to develop a follow-through process. Due consideration should be given in the follow up and follow through to developing reports or processes which will be of value to:

   a. teachers
   b. counselors
   c. job placement staff
   d. school administrators
   e. employers
   f. industry-education council
   g. school advisory committees
   h. school board
   i. Armed Services
   j. organized labor
   k. general public

After each group has made its presentation and has been reacted to by the other participants, it would be advisable to switch the assignments each group was given and have each group develop either a follow-up or follow-through presentation based on the presentation which was given as well as the total group's reactions. A follow-up instrument and follow-through process should be developed which has practical application to the district from which the participant is coming.

After an oral presentation to the participants, copies of the above paper should be reproduced for distribution to each participant.

DEVELOPING A PLAN FOR YOUR SCHOOL SYSTEM

The following steps may be followed in developing a plan for a school system:

1. A committee should be selected to identify local goals and objectives on which follow-up information will be sought. Also, at this time, the committee should consider recommendations for the follow through use of information.

2. Research should be conducted regarding types of follow up which may currently be in operation.

3. Appropriate follow-up forms and procedures should be developed with input from those individuals who will use the information whether they be administrators, counselors, teachers, community representatives, etc.

4. A determination should be made to whom this information should be sought from. For example, students, former students, employers, educational institutes, and so forth. A further consideration, at this point, should be given to whether this study is to be conducted on students who have recently graduated as compared to those who have been out of school for three, four, or five years.

5. Consideration should be given to cost involved, depth and scope of the study, method or implementation and utilization of resources other than local; example, State Department of Education.

6. A timeline should be established with objectives in terms of activities to be completed by specific established dates.

7. Consideration should be given to the revision of the follow-up, follow-through process on a periodic basis and an analysis should be periodically conducted on the questions used and the follow-up format and their relevance to existing needs.

It is necessary for a plan for follow up and follow through in a school system to have the support and cooperation of top administration. The process of developing a plan should be shared with top administration and most certainly, administration at all levels should be involved, if at all possible. In this respect, a committee which has representation from all involved administration is strongly recommended.

Activities designed to attain these goals are classified into two categories with follow up representing the compilation of data and follow through - the use of that data.

1. Follow up may be defined as those activities associated with periodic statistical and analytical studies and reports which take place after the student leaves school; follow-up activities can provide the school administration and its job placement services program with major quantitative and qualitative evaluation elements related to the effectiveness of both the placement program and the school.

2. The definition of follow through is the application of follow-up data to existing school services and programs. It is also the use of follow-up data, in the identification and documentation of need for new programs, which will benefit students.

FOLLOW UP - FOLLOW THROUGH

There is sufficient difference between follow-up procedures for in-school students placed on jobs and school-leavers (both graduates and dropouts) to warrant separate discussion for each category.

1. In-School Students - The contractual obligations of the student, school and employer serve as the basis for follow up after in-school students are placed on the job. In an ideal situation, follow up should begin with an employer's student evaluation report on the first day the student starts on the job. This form should be filled in by the employer on a weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly basis, depending on state department of education or local school system policy. Discussion of this procedure by placement services staff with the student during a post-placement interview will alert the student-employee that the employer should be submitting the evaluation report on a periodic basis and that the report should be reviewed by the placement staff with the student. Each student-employee also is to be informed that he/she may be visited on the job periodically by the placement staff member who may discuss with the employer details of the evaluation report. In addition, the student may be asked to evaluate the employer's working conditions, adherence to provisions of the training agreement, work and socialization practices, and attitudes of full-time employees. Student evaluations of their employers may be conducted in a group session by the job placement staff for the purpose of helping students understand the world-of-work, its constraints and its social structure. If complaints are registered about an employer which appear to be valid, job placement staff should discuss these complaints with the employer. If there is no improvement and the complaints against a specific employer continue to prove valid, that employer should no longer be provided student-employees.

   Student group sessions should be a regularly scheduled event on the calendar of the job placement staff, as should visitations to the student on the site. Before each visit, staff should call the employer or his/her personnel representative to confirm an appointment.

SUGGESTED READINGS

Angelo C. Gilh, Sr., "Follow-Up Means Feedback," American Vocational Journal, March, 1975 (Washington, D.C., American Vocational Association).

Seymour T. Brantner, "Follow-Up Studies: Who Benefits," American Vocational Journal, March, 1975 (Washington, D.C., American Vocational Association).

Jack Dale, "Placement and Follow-Up: Sarasota County," Update, June, 1974 (Tallahassee, Florida, Florida State University, Career Education Center).

The College Placement Council, Salary Survey: Annual Final Report, July, 1975 (Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, The College Placement Council).

Guidelines for Placement Services and Follow-Up Studies, (Tallahassee, Florida, State Department of Education, 1973).

Raymond A. Wasil, School-Based Placement Services, A Procedural Manual for Development, Implementation and Operation (Published 1972, revised 1974 and 1976).

Raymond A. Wasil, Pre-Employment Model With Thirteen (13) Mini-Units (Published 1972, revised 1976).

Raymond A. Wasil, Follow-Up Model for Implementation (Published 1972, revised 1974).

Raymond A. Wasil, Model Use of Data Processing in Placement and Guidance (Published 1972, revised 1974).

Ohio Department of Education
Division of Guidance and Testing
Raymond A. Wasil, Director
55 South Front Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215
(614) 466-2103